

February 8, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker
United States House of Representatives
568 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer, Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, Leader
United States House of Representatives
2433 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leaders Schumer, McConnell, and Jeffries:

The undersigned organizations write in support of the Reinvesting in America's Shoreline Economies & Ecosystems Act (RISEE Act, S. 373 & H.R. 913) and urge your consideration to include this piece of legislation in any forthcoming package.

Outdoor recreation is a powerful force in the American economy. In 2022, the outdoor industry, led by hunting, fishing, and boating generated \$1.1 trillion in economic output, comprised 2.2 percent of U.S. Gross Domestic Product and supported 5 million jobs. Additionally, a 2021 joint report by the Bureau of Economic Analysis and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration found that recreation and tourism are the top contributors to the significant economic footprint of the nation's oceans and Great Lakes. The Covid-19 pandemic renewed enthusiasm for Americans to return to the outdoors and engage in healthy activities like recreational boating, angling, and hunting, all of which are important to the American System of Conservation Funding through their contributions to the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs. It is imperative that we have healthy coastal habitats that continue to bolster outdoor recreation and perpetuate the additional conservation investments these activities provide.

The RISEE Act diversifies federal conservation funding by dedicating a portion of offshore wind revenue to coastal resiliency investments. These funds would be directed to states adjacent to where production occurs to be used for projects such as coastal resiliency, wetland restoration, hurricane protection, and infrastructure improvements to protect fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. Small businesses in rural, vulnerable areas often face the brunt of natural disasters and depend on robust, resilient infrastructure to be able to make a living.

Our organizations also support amending the Gulf of Mexico Security Act of 2006 (GOMESA) to dedicate more of the existing offshore energy production revenue from the Gulf to support coastal restoration and resiliency. Specifically, we support lifting the current cap on revenues shared with Gulf producing states as well as lifting the \$125 million state-side funding cap on the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This additional funding would facilitate critical investments in environmental restoration and resilient infrastructure projects in vulnerable communities threatened by sea level rise, coastal erosion, and flooding. Now, more than ever, it is crucial to ensure that communities are prepared and well-equipped to bounce back from extreme weather events as their homes, businesses, and lives lay in the path of increasingly dangerous and costly storms.

Healthy, resilient coastlines and estuaries are critically important for outdoor recreation, coastal and marine dependent fish and wildlife populations, local economies, and the people and businesses who

live along or near our nation's shores. We appreciate your leadership on this bill and look forward to working with you to realize its passage this Congress.

Sincerely,

AFFTA Fisheries Fund
American Forest Foundation
American Fly Fishing Trade Association
American Sportfishing Association
American Woodcock Society
Angler Action Foundation
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (B.A.S.S.)
Bonefish & Tarpon Trust
Catch-A-Dream Foundation
Coastal Conservation Association
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Delta Waterfowl
Ducks Unlimited
Fly Fishers International
Guy Harvey Foundation
Izaak Walton League of America
Land Trust Alliance
National Deer Association
National Marine Manufacturers Association
National Wildlife Federation
New York State Conservation Council
North American Grouse Partnership
Outdoor Industry Association
Resource Management Service, LLC
Ruffed Grouse Society
The Conservation Fund
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Wildlife Forever
Wildlife Mississippi